



EUROSPEAK STUDENT HANDBOOK



Reading, November 2023

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Attractions & Information

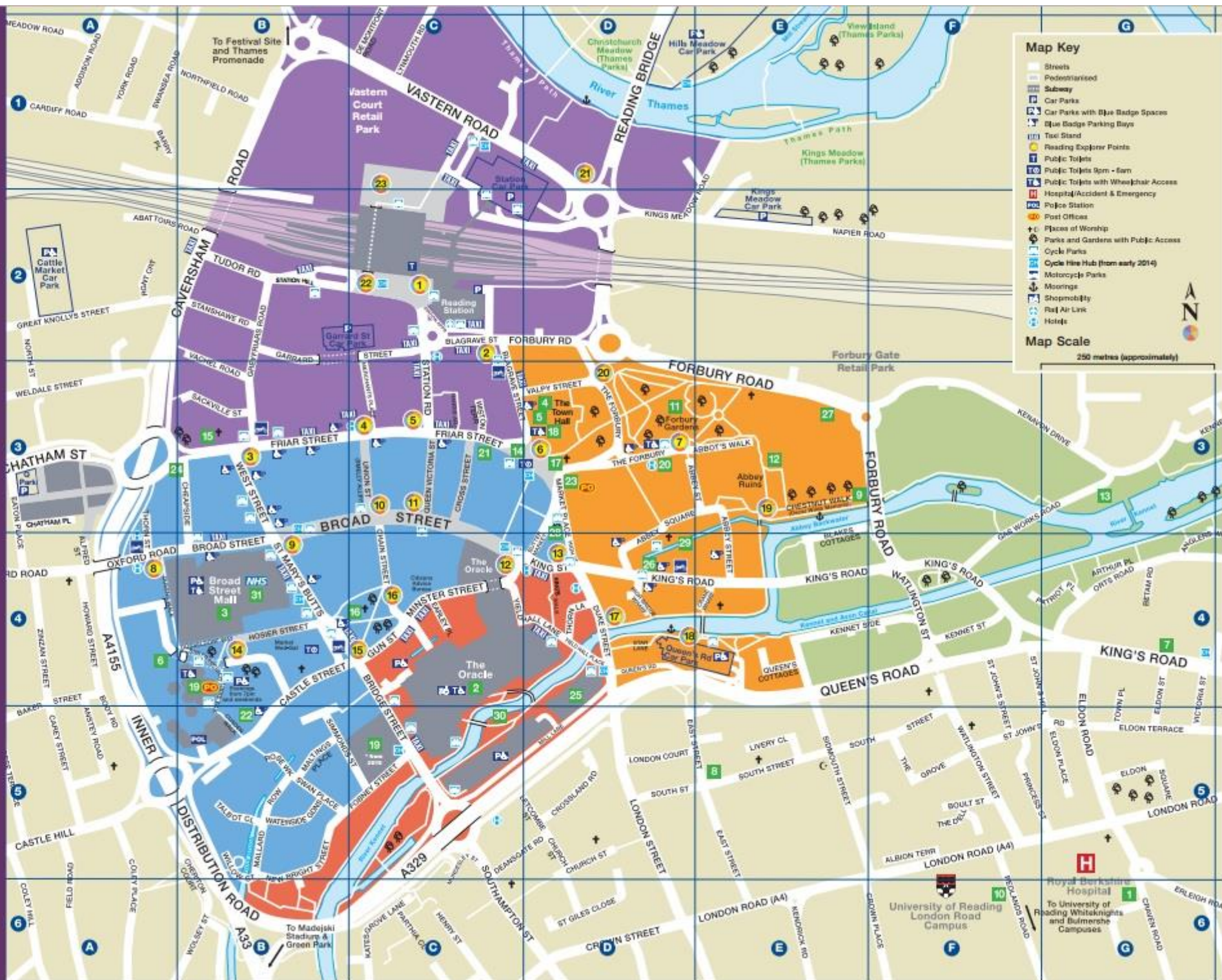
- 1 Royal Berkshire Hospital G6
- 2 The Oracle Shopping and Leisure C4
- 3 Broad Street Mall B4
- 4 Concert Hall D3
- 5 Museum of Reading D3
- 6 Hexagon A4
- 7 Reading College G4
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- 11 Forbury Gardens D3
- 12 Abbey Ruins E3
- 13 Riverside Museum at Blake's Lock G3
- 14 Queen Victoria Monument C3
- 15 Greyfriars Church B3
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- 17 Saint Laurence's Church D3
- 18 Town Hall D3
- 19 Civic Centre B4 *C5 from 2015
- 20 Crown Court D3
- 21 County Court C3
- 22 Magistrates Courts B5
- 23 Main Post Office D3
- 24 Job Centre Plus B3
- 25 Cinema D4
- 26 Library D4
- 27 HMP Reading (Prison) E3
- 28 Simeon Monument D3
- 29 Abbey Mill Arch D4
- 30 The Oracle Riverside C5
- 31 Reading Walk-in Health Centre B4

District Key



Reading Explorer Points

- 1 Railway Station C2
- 2 Blagrove Street C2
- 3 Friar Street/West Street B3
- 4 Friar Street/Merchants Place C3
- 5 Friar Street/Station Road C3
- 6 Town Hall Square D3
- 7 The Forbury/Abbot's Walk D3
- 8 Oxford Road/Queens Walk A4
- 9 Broad Street/Saint Mary's Butts B4
- 10 Broad Street/Union Street C3
- 11 Broad Street/Queen Victoria Street C3
- 12 Broad Street/Minster Street C4
- 13 King Street/High Street D4
- 14 Civic Centre B4
- 15 Saint Mary's Butts/Gun Street C4
- 16 Chain Street/Saint Mary's Minster C4
- 17 Duke Street D4
- 18 Queen's Road Car Park D4
- 19 Chestnut Walk E3
- 20 North West Forbury D3
- 21 Vastern Road D1
- 22 Train Station South C2
- 23 Train Station North C1



WHEN YOU FIRST ARRIVE

When you first arrive at the school, we will help you with:

BANK ACCOUNTS

When you are studying full time at Eurospeak, we will help you to open a bank account. For banking options that follow Sharia Law, please ask us, or ask in any local bank for more information.

To open a bank account, you will need:

- Your passport
- A letter from Eurospeak
- Tenancy Agreement / Letter from your Home Stay

STUDENT CARDS

To get a student card, [click here](#). You can order the card online. This card can have benefits for you. For example, it will allow you to instantly prove your official student status and access student discounts and offers worldwide.

TRAVEL CARDS FOR BUSES AND TRAIN

All buses accept cash and card payments for single and return tickets as well as many daily, weekly and monthly passes. You can get cheaper bus or train tickets if you buy them for a week or a month.



You can get bus passes from the Reading Buses Shop in Broad Street Mall. You can get train tickets at Reading train station.

For more information about transport in Reading, including for information about train and bus passes, please [click here](#). You can also ask at school reception if you need help.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT LIFE IN THE UK

HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

It is important that you tell the welfare staff if you have any medical conditions, this means we can help you get any assistance you may need quickly.

GENERAL MEDICAL ADVICE

If you need general medical advice, you can visit the Walk-In Centre at Broad Street Mall in the centre of Reading. You do not need an appointment, but you may have to wait some time. The address is provided below.

NHS Walk-In Centre,
Broad Street Mall,
1st Floor,
103-105 Broad Street Mall,
Reading, RG1 7QA



You will need have to have proof of identity, like your passport. You may have to pay for medical treatment. For more information [click here](#).

You can also register with a local GP practice. Here, you will be able to make appointments. To find out about how to register with a GP practice visit [click here](#).

For further general information on health issues [click here](#) and [here](#).

HOSPITAL

The hospital is at the following address:

Royal Berkshire Hospital,
Craven Rd,
Reading,
RG1 5AN

Tel: 0118 322 5111



Don't go directly to the hospital unless you have an emergency.

EMERGENCIES

If there is an emergency in the school, inform a member of staff as soon as possible. You should also contact our first aider Gaurav Vahi (gaurav.vahi@eurospeak.ac.uk) for assistance.

If you need medical help immediately, call 111 (NHS Direct)

For emergencies, call 999 (Accidents and Emergencies). This is for people with serious injuries or serious illness requiring immediate treatment.

DENTAL TREATMENT

You should try to have your teeth checked by a dentist at least once a year.

You can find lists of dentists who give NHS treatment at local main post offices or at [Find a NHS Dentist](#)

You should ask the dentist whether they accept National Health Service (NHS) patients - many do not. The dentist may wish to conduct the same process for checking your entitlement to NHS care as a General Practitioner (GP) [Find a GP - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk) would. If you already have a GP, then the dental practice should contact the GP to ensure that they have undertaken an entitlement check. If accepted by the dentist as an NHS patient, you will need to give the dentist the NHS number on your medical card.

If you are entitled to NHS treatment, you may still have to contribute towards the cost of your dental treatment. If you are not entitled to NHS treatment, or the dentist you choose does not take NHS patients (some dentists will only accept private patients), you will have to pay for the full cost of your treatment.

You may be able to get free dental treatment from dental students at a teaching hospital. This applies even if you are not entitled to NHS treatment.

If you need dental treatment in an emergency

call a dentist: some surgeries offer appointments at short notice.

if you do not have a dentist, find one using [NHS 111](http://www.nhs.uk)

INSURANCE

We advise all students to take out International Student insurance before travelling or as soon as they arrive. You could use Endsleigh or STA Travel. You may have to pay for medical treatment in the UK and this will help to cover the costs as it can be expensive.

RENTING A FLAT OR A HOUSE

If you are hoping to rent your own house, flat or room it is very important that you make sure it is right for you before signing any contract or agreement. Most property owners and estate agents ask you to sign a minimum 6-month contract, so it is important you decide carefully before signing anything. It is a good idea

to visit the property at least twice before you decide to rent. This list may be helpful to you and recommends things to look out for:

- What types of people live in the neighbourhood? If you are renting with your family, you might prefer a more family-friendly area rather than a neighbourhood with lots of students. Is the area quiet or busy?
- Do you feel comfortable and safe there?
- How close is the property to the local shops, supermarkets, bus routes or schools?
- Are there extra costs like TV License and Council Tax?
- Is car parking easy?
- Will the property be cheap to heat and light? Are there meters for your water, gas, and electricity? You should ask what the average costs have been for people who lived there before.
- Does the property look to be in good condition? A property that looks dirty or in a bad condition with broken things can mean that you could have problems in the future.
- Is the property worth the rent being asked for it?
- Make sure there are smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Make sure that the property owner is registered with the Landlord Deposit scheme.
- Check on what furniture and cooking equipment are included. Is contents insurance included?

You may be required to pay Council Tax. [Click here](#) to find out more about this.

PERSONAL SAFETY

This is generally a safe city. However, it is always best to follow these tips to stay safe in the UK.



- DO NOT give out personal details or bank details over the phone or on the internet (even if they say they are calling from places such as your bank or the UK Border Agency).
- If you receive a suspicious phone call, write down the telephone number and name of the personal calling and say you will call them back, then bring the details into the office and we will help you.
- Always keep your passport safe. Keep a photocopy of the important pages of your passport somewhere safe. If you do lose your passport, contact the Police and your Embassy as soon as possible.
- Don't carry large amounts of cash (no more than £250). Try to bring a credit card or travellers cheques and keep these safe. Do not keep your passport, ID card and money together.
- Always have the school telephone number (01189589599) close by. Put it in your phone and keep it on a piece of paper.
- Always use a registered taxi. You can either pre-book a taxi on the phone, or you can use a 'black cab' from the city centre, just be careful that these are real ones.
- In your home make sure your important things such as TV and laptop cannot be easily seen through a window. Also, never leave cash or credit cards lying around your home.
- If you carry a laptop in public, try not to use a computer carry case. Use an ordinary backpack or large handbag to make the laptop less obvious. Always think carefully before using your laptop in crowded places.
- Avoid displaying expensive items such as jewellery, mobile phones, and iPods (including earphones) in busy public places or at night.
- Avoid travelling alone. Travel in bright and busy areas.
- Avoid short cuts like dark paths and parks if you are alone or not certain of the area.
- Always carry your mobile phone or enough small change to make a phone call or take a short taxi journey.
- Be sensible when using your mobile phone.

- When using a public telephone, face outside so you can see out of the phone box.
- If you think you are being followed, cross the street. If you still don't feel safe, make your way to a public place like a shop or restaurant as soon as possible. Don't stop in any empty areas.
- Avoid all fights, walk away if someone is being aggressive towards you.
- Be careful when using a cash machine, never write down your PIN number and never give it to anyone.
- If you live in a student residence, make sure no stranger follows you in when you go through the main entrance.
- Have your keys ready well before you reach the car or house but don't make them obvious.
- Keep your bag close to you however if someone tries to take it let it go. Your safety is more important.

If you have any concerns about your safety in the UK or in school please come and speak to any member of the admin team.

HOMESICKNESS

Being away from home can be very difficult and although most students get over their homesickness after a few days there are some students who experience more long-term difficulties. Some of the reasons could be, for example, the culture, the weather, the food, or missing family and friends. If you are experiencing homesickness, there are some things you can do to help:

[Keep busy.](#)

In the first few weeks it is a good idea for you to go to the classes on the course and get to know your classmates and teachers. This will help you to make new friends. You can also join the social activities and trips

to meet new people. It is never a good idea to stay in your room for long periods as this is likely to make you feel lonely.

Keep a positive attitude.

Try and keep positive. Remind yourself about why you are studying and what your long-term goals are for the future. Try not to think about the things that make you sad and try and concentrate on your studies and your new experiences. The more positive you are the quicker the negative feelings will go.

Stay fit and healthy.

Eating properly and sleeping well are both important. If you make sure you make food regularly and as healthy as possible you will be able to concentrate better, and your energy levels will improve. Good quality sleep is essential. Staying up late every night and playing video games or going out with friends is not a good idea during the week when you are studying. Late nights should be kept to the weekend only.

Family and friends

Keeping in touch with your family and friends is important and regular contact will be helpful and useful to your studies. It is not a good idea to spend long periods every day on the phone telling your family how bad you feel. This will make you feel worse, and your family and friends will worry about you.

Speak to the staff at school.

If you feel sad or depressed, you should always speak to a member of the team at school. They can give you lots of advice and ideas. Remember most students feel homesick when they arrive, and you are not the only student with these issues. We are experienced in handling student's problems and worries so please share your feelings with us. We can also give you information on culture shock and staying safe during your studies.

STUDYING AT BRITISH UNIVERSITIES

If you are interested in studying at a British university, please contact Gaurav Vahi in the office, or by email or telephone on gaurav.vahi@eurospeak.ac.uk or 01189 589 599.

British universities can be very different to universities in your home country. Students often ask us questions about British universities. Please read the questions and answers below. It will help you prepare for going to university.

What types of lessons will I have at university?

There are two types of lesson: lectures and seminars. Lectures are very big classes with sometimes more than a hundred students. In lectures you don't ask questions (except at the end), instead you listen and make notes. Seminars are small classes with usually 10- 12 students or less. They are not like lessons at school. In a seminar, you will discuss and talk about what you have read before the seminar.

Will I learn everything I need from my seminars and lectures?

No, you will only learn the basics of your course from your lectures. You will also carry out some reading to continue developing your knowledge of the subject.

How will I learn things, then?

You will learn from reading books and articles published in scientific magazines.

How much time will I spend reading every day at university?

You will spend about 4 to 6 hours a day reading and studying after your lectures. This is an estimate only, and in many cases, you may need more time.

How fast will I need to be able to read in English to study at university?

You will need to be able to read fast and fluently, close to how you read in your first language. You will not be able to look up every word you don't understand in a dictionary as you won't have time for this.

Will my teachers tell me what read for my assignments?

No, they may give you a general list of books and articles, but you will have to then select what you want to read and find your own books and articles (for example, in the library).

How many books or newspapers will I need to look at to do an assignment?

It depends on your subject. For a Bachelor's degree, you may need about 6 or 7 books/articles to do an assignment. For a Master's you will need more.

Do I need to read and write very well in English? My speaking and writing are very good.

You can't pass a British university degree with poor reading or writing skills. You must try to improve your reading and writing.

How can I learn to read better at Eurospeak?

You should read regularly. We have a collection of graded readers (short books with simple language), talk to your teacher if you would like to borrow one. Try to read as much as you can outside of school.

IELTS EXAMS

Many of our students plan to take the IELTS exam, as this is, in general, an entry requirement at British universities. To apply for an IELTS exam [click here](#). You can then choose which date you would like to take your exam as well as the city you want to take it in. You can apply online or get an application form from the office.

INFORMATION FOR VISA STUDENTS

If you are studying at the school on a Tier 4 student visa and you have been issued with a CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) you must not breach the terms of your visa. To find information about the conditions of your stay on the UK Border Agency website [click here](#).

As a student, you:

- Must not ask for any government benefits (also known as 'public funds') for which you do not have the right.
- Must go to all your classes; the school has reporting duties and will inform the UK Border Agency if you stop attending without contacting the school.

If you need to renew your visa or extend your visa you are able to do so in the UK as long as you meet the financial requirements and have a CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies).

STUDENT VISITOR VISA OR EXTENDED STUDENT VISITOR VISA



If you are on a student visitor visa or an extended student visitor visa and you would like to find more information about the conditions of your stay [click here](#). You cannot extend or renew this type of visa and will need to return home to your country when the visa finishes.

You can speak to Gaurav Vahi or to the reception team if you have specific questions about your visa or you can email them on gaurav.vahi@eurospeak.ac.uk or international@eurospeak.ac.uk.

SMOKING

In the UK you must be 18 or over if you want to buy cigarettes. Smoking is not allowed in the school. If you wish to smoke, you may do so outside but be careful. Please do not stand near the door when smoking.

Do not throw cigarettes on the floor outside the school or anywhere in the street in any city as you may face a fine from the municipal authorities.

ALCOHOL

Do not drink alcohol if you are under 18.

In the UK you must be 18 or over to buy alcohol. You must be 18 to drink alcohol in a pub. If you are 16 or 17 you can go into a pub but can't drink alcohol.

Students must not be drunk on the school grounds at any time. Students must not come to school if they have drunk any alcohol.



Many UK students go to pubs to meet friends. Some people do not drink alcohol in pubs. You can drink cola, lemonade, or orange juice, or you can eat food. If you are having alcohol for the first time, be careful. If you feel drunk, ask your friends to take you home or call for a recognised taxi firm.

DRUGS

In the UK many drugs are against the law. You might go to prison if you buy, take, or sell drugs. If someone offers you drugs you should refuse. Students must not come to school if they have taken drugs.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

GENERAL SAFETY

- If something is broken, tell your teacher.
- If you think people may trip over something, tell your teacher.
- Read safety notices carefully.
- Do not run around the school.
- Do not touch electrical equipment.
- Do not carry too many books etc. when walking up and down the stairs.
- Use your common sense.

WELFARE

It is important that your time in the UK and the school is safe and happy. If you are worried about anything it is important that you tell us as soon as possible so that we can help you. You can get help and support from our Welfare Officer, Gaurav Vahi. A Welfare Officer is a person responsible for promoting safeguarding and a safe and inclusive environment. You can contact Gaurav Vahi in the office or at gaurav.vahi@eurospeak.ac.uk or 01189 589599. If you have any issues when you are not at school, you can call 07931805819.

STUDENTS UNDER 18

When you study at Eurospeak, you will be studying with a variety of students from different countries. You will meet people from very different backgrounds, ages, and cultures. It is important that your time in the



UK and the school is safe and happy. If you are worried about anything during your time in the school or out of school, it is important that you inform us as soon as possible, so that we can help you.

You can get help and support from our Welfare Officer, Gaurav Vahi (gaurav.vahi@eurospeak.ac.uk). To find out more about our Welfare Officer [click here](#).

All staff members who have regular one-to-one contact with students under 18 will do a DBS check. This is something employers use to check their employees' police records.

Your teachers will be told that you are under 18 and will think about this when they are planning activities or lessons.

If the school has any worries about your welfare or behaviour, we will contact your parents or the person who is responsible for you.

If you are under 18, please be aware of the following:

- You cannot buy alcohol or tobacco under the age of 18.
- The driving age is 17 and you will need to have a driving licence, insurance, and all necessary documents if you want to drive.
- Students under 18 will need to have parental permission to stay with friends and relatives.
- Under 18s cannot sign a legal contract to rent accommodation and need to be 18 to rent property.

KITCHEN

We have a kitchen at Eurospeak that you can use any time. In the kitchen, you can make tea and coffee (freely provided by Eurospeak). You can also heat up your food in the microwave.

Kitchen rules:

- Keep this room clean and tidy.
- Be careful of hot food and drinks.
- Clean cups and plates after using them.
- Try to speak English to be more inclusive; there may be other students who don't share your first language.

STUDENT AREA

We have a student area where you can socialise with other students, have your lunch, or do your homework. You are welcome to use the student area any time.

Student area rules:

- Keep this room clean and tidy.
- If there are classes in classrooms near the student area, please be quiet.
- Respect other students in the student area.
- Try to speak English to be more inclusive; there may be other students who don't share your first language. It is also a good opportunity to practise conversation.

PLACES WHERE YOU CAN PRAY

We have places in school for students to pray. Room 1 is reserved for men, and room 3 for women. Please check at reception to see when the room is available.

There are also many places for you to practise religion in the area. Please ask us for more information about local places for religion in Reading.

INTERNET

Wi-fi is available all day. You can use the wi-fi to learn English and access the virtual classroom or programmes from your coursebook. You can also use it for emailing friends and surfing the net.

You must not download any files or programmes. You must not look at any prohibited websites; website that seek to demean or abuse a person based on their gender, religion, ethnic origin, socio-economic background or political beliefs, or sites that have adult content.

FIRE EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. If you are the first to see a fire or hear the smoke alarms, raise the alarm immediately. Break the glass on the nearest fire alarm and set it off.
2. The break glass signs are at the top of the main staircase and to the left of the front door next to the fire alarm panel.
3. Leave the building by the nearest exit or the front door. Do not attempt to put out fires.
4. Leave your bags and coats in the room.
5. Walk out of the building, DO NOT RUN.
6. The emergency services will be called by a member of staff or can be contacted by mobile phone if you have one. Dial 999 for the Fire Brigade.
7. If in the student toilets, leave as quickly as possible and exit to the left as you come up the staircase.
8. If the main staircase/corridor is blocked, open all windows and shout for assistance.

9. To stop the fire going further close doors to all rooms.
10. Meeting point: Outside Bill's Restaurant / St. Mary's Butts Church.
11. Once at the meeting point, please find your teacher. Do not leave the meeting point.

FIRE EVACUATION MAP



STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS

We think it is important for you to enjoy yourself when you are not studying. We regularly organise social

activities in and outside the school. These include, for example, trips to other cities, visits to museums, sports events, arts and crafts sessions, and board games activities. You are always welcome to take part in these activities. This is a good way for you to meet new people and practise your English as well as a good chance to learn about English culture and society.

Look out for posters around school to find out about forthcoming trips and events. You can also ask at reception any time.

BANK HOLIDAYS 2023

New Year's Day	Mon, 2 Jan 2023
Good Friday	Fri, 7 Apr 2023
Easter Monday	Mon, 10 Apr 2023
Early May Bank Holiday	Mon, 2 May 2023
Bank holiday for the coronation of King Charles III	Mon, 8 May 2023
Spring Bank Holiday	Mon, 29 May 2023
Summer Bank Holiday	Mon, 28 Aug 2023
Christmas Day	Mon, 25 Dec 2023
Boxing Day	Tue, 26 Dec 2023

BANK HOLIDAYS 2024

New Year's Day	Mon, 1 Jan 2024
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Good Friday	Fri, 29 Mar 2024
Easter Monday	Mon, 1 Apr 2024
Early May Bank Holiday	Mon, 6 May 2024
Spring Bank Holiday	Mon, 27 May 2024
Summer Bank Holiday	Mon, 26 Aug 2024
Christmas Day	Wed, 25 Dec 2024
Boxing Day	Thu, 26 Dec 2024

SCHOOL POLICIES

We have a policies handbook that you should also get familiar with. It contains, for example, our policies on the following:

- Payments
- Complaints
- Attendance
- Sickness and absence
- Level progression

To find our policies handbook, [Eurospeak Policies](#)

SCHOOL RULES

- Please speak English at school. There are many students who don't speak your first language; if everyone speaks English, we will have a more friendly and inclusive environment.
- Please be polite and respect the staff and other students.
- Do not take food or drink into the classrooms (except water).
- Clean up after yourself and wash all plates and cups you use in the kitchen.
- Help keep all rooms clean and tidy.
- Do not use mobile phones in class unless allowed by the teacher.
- Don't use messaging and social networking apps (e.g., WhatsApp, Instagram, etc.).
- Don't chat with your classmates in class, focus on the lesson.
- Don't be late for class. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, you will not be allowed into the lesson.
- Ask your teacher if you want to take any books or materials home.
- Do your homework on time.
- You must not drink alcohol or be drunk on the school premises.
- You must not smoke inside the school building.
- You must not be involved in any illegal activity.

STUDENT FORMS

Here you will find the forms you will need to complete if you want to make requests, suggestions, or complaints.

TAKING HOLIDAYS DURING YOUR STUDIES

If you want time off during your studies, please complete and submit the Holiday Request Form. To find this form, [click here](#).

If you are a student on a membership option, you need to let us know on your first day about your holidays. In some situations, we cannot give permission for holidays. This could be because of your visa status, low attendance, or other issues. Please ask for the policy on holidays if in doubt. If you are a sponsored student, you will need permission from your sponsor. If you need a holiday letter, we need 24 hours to provide one.

LEAVING THE SCHOOL EARLY (FOR VISA NATIONALS)

Students who want to leave the school earlier than their original offer must follow this system:

- Complete a Leaving Early Form. To find this form, [click here](#).
- If you are moving to a new school or University, an offer letter for your new course must be sent to Eurospeak.
- If you are returning home, we need to see your flight tickets.
- Any other evidence to support your decision must also be copied and shown to the school.

SUGGESTIONS



At Eurospeak we welcome and appreciate your suggestions. You can make suggestions in these three ways:

- Speak to a teacher or a member of the admin team.
- Tell us about it when we ask you for feedback.
- Complete a suggestions form. To find this form, [click here](#).

COMPLAINTS

You must read our complaints policy before making a formal written complaint. To find our complaints policy, click [Eurospeak Policies](#). There, you will also find the form you need to fill in if you want to make a formal written complaint.

REFUNDS

If you would like to ask for a refund for any reason, you will need to complete a Refund Request Form. To find this form, [click here](#). We only give refunds in exceptional situations. To find information about our terms and conditions, click [Terms and Conditions](#). Please ask at reception if you need more information.

STUDENT REQUESTS

You may want to do any of the following: Request a bank letter, invoice, certificate, enrolment letter, council tax letter, holiday letter, completion letter, or a final course letter. If you would like to request any of those, you will need to complete the Student Request Form. To find this form, [click here](#). Please be aware that we will normally need 24 hours to process your request.